



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

*Office of Steven K. Reviczky
Commissioner*



The Connecticut Department of Agriculture supports the general intent of H.B. 5383, *An Act Concerning the Farm Viability Matching Grant Program and the Connecticut Farm Link Program*, to further enhance the viability of Connecticut agriculture.

The agency's Farm Viability grant program and its FarmLink program already have been instrumental and effective in enhancing farm viability in the state.

Agency management continually reviews program administration and outcomes, making adjustments to build upon both programs' positive results. Among those adjustments are creative, fiscally neutral changes such as:

- The reorganization of staff assignments to improve the delivery of program services in a streamlined and more user-friendly manner
- Prioritization of grant awards based on priorities identified by the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development through the in-depth engagement of hundreds of stakeholders across all sectors of Connecticut agriculture over several years of council work
- A newly revamped FarmLink website designed and launched by agency personnel

In addition, the Department of Agriculture has been working with the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Policy and Management to acquire additional technical resources and manpower to augment FarmLink outreach, investigations, and educational programming, through the following:

- Durational Environmental Assistant 1 staff
- Cooperative education internships with graduate students possessing appropriate technical skills and pursuing advanced degrees in the environmental sciences or closely related fields of study

The agency is confident that these steps, combined with its ongoing programming improvements, will continue to achieve the intended outcomes of H.B. 5383.

165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-713-2501 Fax: 860-713-2514
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